Private cellular licencees in West Bengal circle

463. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that existing private cellular licencees are not operating in the West Bengal Circle;

(b) if so, the names of such companies, the reason for their inaction, the status of the projects and the remedial/punitive action initiated by Government;

(c) whether it is a fact that in the absence of competition in launching of cellular service in the circle by BSNL would be commercially a very lucrative proposition; and

(d) if so, the details of the proposed roll out plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Sir, M/s. Reliance Telecom Private Limited is the only private service provider granted license for operating Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) in West Bengal Telecom Circle. As per information available, the company is operating CMTS in 16 District Headquarters/cities in West Bengal Telecom circle and the number of subscribers is 28974, as on 30.9.2001. The effective date of the License is 12.12.1995 and the company was required to start the Service within one year from the effective date. However, the service was started on 24.10.1997. Also as per the terms and conditions of the license agreement the company was required to cover 10% of District Headquarters within one year and 50% of District Headquarters within three years. The coverage requirement could not be met by the company. Hence, for delayed start of service and for not meeting the coverage criteria, Liquidated Damage Charge of Rs. 100 lakhs was levied as per the License Agreement and the same has since been paid by the company.

Recently, the Government invited bids for induction of additional private Cellular Operators in various service areas of the country including West Bengal Telecom Circle. No bid was received for West Bengal Telecom Circle. However, BSNL has been granted license to provide Cellular Service in West Bengal Telecom Circle, apart from other service areas.

(c) and (d) BSNL has plans to cover 31 cities in Phase-I and four additional District Headquarters in Phase-II in the West Bengal Telecom Circle Service Area, the details of which are given in the Statement. The network roll-out is expected in Financial Year 2002-2003.

Statement

List of cities planned to be covered in West Bengal licensed service area

Sl. No.	Place	Capacity in phase-I	Expansion in phase-II	Total capacity planned
1	Asansol	2000	3000	5000
2	Durgapur	2000	3000	5000
3	Burdwan	1500	2500	4000
4	Chittaranjan	1000	1600	2600
5	Raniganj	1000	1600	2600
6	Bankura	1000	1600	2600
7	Berhampore	1500	2500	4000
8	Farakka	1000	1600	2600
9	Chanditala	1000	1600	2600
10	Habra	1000	1600	2600
11	Bagnan	1000	1600	2600
12	Bongaon	1000	1600	2600
13	Basirhat	1000	1600	2600
14	Coochbehar	1000	1600	2600
15	Gagtok	3000	4750	7750
16	Jalpaiguri	1500	2500	4000
17	Alipurduar	500	800	1300
18	Kharagpur	4000	6400	10400
19	Contai	500	800	1300
20	Krishnanagar	1000	1600	2600
21	Ranaghat	1000	1600	2600
22	Malda	2000	3000	5000
23	Purulia	1000	1600	2600
24	Raiganj	1500	2500	4000
25	Balurghat	500	800	1300
26	Siliguri	2500	4000	6500
27	Darjeeling	1000	1600	2600
28	Kalimpomg	500	800	1300
29	Bholpur	1000	1600	2600
30	Suri	1000	1600	2600
31	Midnapur	1000	1600	2600
	WB TOTAL	40500	64550	105050

Additional District HQ to be covered in Phase-II

1	Gayzing	1000
2	Mangan	1000
3	Namche	1000
4	Car Nicobar	1000

Introduction of WLL based system by the BSNL

464. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that WLL based system with limited mobility would be introduced by BSNL with priority on covering uncovered villages and inaccessible areas;

(b) if so, the role out plan for this for 2001-02 and 2002-03, State-wise; and

(c) the details of waiting list, registered demand, uncovered villages in absolute and percentage terms and teledensity for 31st March, 1999, 31st March, 2000, 31st March, 2001 and 1st Novermber, 2001, circle-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR):

(a) Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) systems with Fixed Wireless Terminals are being introduced by BSNL with priority on covering uncovered villages and inaccessible areas.

(b) Six lakh lines of WLL equipment comprising of 1200 Base Stations with 500 lines each are being procured for the year 2001-2002. The roll-out plan is given in State (*See*-below). There is a plan to procure 13 lakh lines of WLL equipment for the year 2002-2003 for provision of 10 lakh rural DELs and replacement of MARR based Village Public Telephones.

(c) The circle-wise details of the waiting list, registered demand, uncovered villages in absolute and percentage terms and teledensity for 31st March, 1999, 31st March, 2000, 31st March, 2001 and 1st November, 2001 is given in Statement-II.